



THE KEYNOTER



Fiorello La Guardia

The Big Apple's "Little Flower"

NYC's Fusion Mayors • John V. Lindsay

Four Miserable Years • Truman's Porch • Bryan's Trees

Editor's Message

There's something about New York City. Los Angeles may cover more ground and Mexico City may have more people, but nowhere - not London, not Hong Kong, not Rio - can quite match the Big Apple. That goes in spades when talking about politics. Two quick snapshots may give some of its flavor. First, when a Jewish opponent accused Italian Fiorello La Guardia of anti-Semitism, La Guardia responded by challenging him to a debate to take place wholly in Yiddish. Second, no less than Theodore Roosevelt was a candidate for mayor of New York. He lost in a landslide. This coming year may provide another example of New York's unique politics when First Lady Hillary Clinton tries to jump into the game. It promises to be the most entertaining race of the 2000 campaign.

Two corrections from the last issue are necessary. First, the name of Dave Shanton was accidentally left off the list of those contributing illustrations to the Patsy Mink interview. As hard as it is to find such material, Dave's contribution deserves to be noted. Second, Jerry Bixby's articles about Clinton buttons drew a correction from another Michigan Democratic Party official, Donald Mosher (APIC 6755). Mosher writes, "on page 26 two buttons were identified as 'the two buttons on the lower right were produced by the state Clinton/Gore campaign.' In fact, these buttons were produced by the 9th Congressional Democratic Committee through F. J. Grafik...and distributed at the events indicated on each button. #1 of 100 was given to Congressman Dale E. Kildee and #2 of 100 was given to the chairperson of the 9th district. The remaining buttons were given, with certificates of authority, to delegates to the National Democratic Convention in Chicago and to 9th district members attending the Inaugural of President Clinton on 1/20/97." Thanks for the correction, Don. As Kildee is my congressman, I am especially pleased to set the record straight.

Thanks to two writers who continue to enliven the pages of *The Keynoter*: Stephen Cresswell and Steve Baxley. Both men run Internet newsletters that web-surfers will enjoy. The addresses of their sites are elsewhere in the issue. They often deal with specific items, something that many collectors enjoy. I confess a personal interest for the broader environment into which an item fits but I know many collectors prefer shorter stories, more focused on individual items. As this magazine departs the 20th century for the 21st century (I know about the math but will go with popular culture on this one), *The Keynoter* will continue to search for better ways to meet the needs and interests of our readership. New APIC President Chris Hearn is putting renewed emphasis on being responsive to the membership and *The Keynoter* will be a part of that. Thanks to outgoing president Neal Machander for his devotion to the hobby and thanks to Bob Fratkin for his continuing devotion to making this publication a useful source of historical information.



Michael Kelly
Editor



Roosevelt-Fairbanks pin in the form of TR's famous "pince-nez" glasses (shown enlarged).

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APIC seeks to encourage and support the study and preservation of original materials issuing from and relating to political campaigns of the United States of America and to bring its members fuller appreciation and deeper understanding of the candidates and issues that form our political heritage.

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Illustrations: The editor wishes to thank the following for providing illustrations for this issue: Steve Baxley, Stephen Cresswell, Roger Fischer, Robert Fratkin, David Frent, William Honan, Trudy Mason, New York City Library and Edmund Sullivan.

Covers: Front: An autographed photo of Fiorello La Guardia as a major in the WWI Army Air Corp. **Back:** A poster from the 1933 Fusion Party campaign for mayor of New York City. Poster colors are red, blue, orange and black.

IN THE NEXT ISSUE



Start the new century with an interview with former Virginia Gov. Doug Wilder (a 1992 presidential hopeful) with related stories on Senator Harry Byrd (also a presidential hopeful) and Congressman Virgil Goode of Virginia; two recently discovered new variations on the TR Equality button; Congressman Oscar De Priest and President Herbert Hoover, and other features.

Fiorello La Guardia:

Reform and Fusion in The Big Apple

By Michael Kelly



"Isn't it grand? There isn't a single, solitary county chairman of *either* party in favor of my administration!"

-Fiorello La Guardia

From the earliest days of partisan politics, New York City was a Democratic stronghold. Aaron Burr organized the city for the Democrats under Thomas Jefferson and was rewarded with the vice presidency in 1800. Burr then tried to grab the presidency from Jefferson when the electoral college produced an uncertain result but Burr's political career ended when he killed Alexander Hamilton (also of NYC) in a duel. This combination of organization, patronage, betrayal and combat set a pattern for city politics that still holds two centuries later.

Since the formation of the Democratic Party, the mayor of New York City has almost always been a Democrat. Only five Republicans were ever mayor: Seth Low in 1901, John Purroy Mitchel in 1913, Fiorello La Guardia in 1933, John Lindsay in 1965 and Rudy Giuliani in 1993. Each of these individuals is a unique story in himself but none so much as "The Little Flower," Fiorello La Guardia.

Born the son of Italian immigrants in New York City in 1882, Fiorello La Guardia grew up in the wide-open spaces of the Arizona Territory where his father served with the Army. Short and stout, he hardly fit the Western myth, but to the end of his days, he wore an oversized Stetson hat as a reminder of his beloved West. After his father's death, the La Guardia family returned to Europe and lived in the Italian-speaking part of the dying Austrian Empire (although Fiorello retained his US citizenship and soon went to work for the US State Department).

Returning to New York City, he became a lawyer and showed an intense commitment to justice and concern for the downtrodden. His cosmopolitan background had given him fluency in several languages, a useful skill in the melting pot of New York, but his bustling law practice rarely made

any money. He was always willing to take on the cause of the poor and often didn't receive a penny in fees. Word spread through the immigrant neighborhoods of the little lawyer who spoke the languages of the new arrivals and was willing to fight for them.

To be a resident of New City with distaste for abuse of public power meant animosity toward the Democratic machine symbolized by Tammany Hall. Despite occasional victories by "good government" and "reform" elements, the predominately-Irish Democratic organization was usually free to plunder city resources with brazen openness. Fiorello became an active and loyal member of his local Republican club, doing the thousand small chores allocated to young activists and waiting his opportunity for greater things. In 1914, his labors were rewarded with the Republican nomination for U.S. Congress in New York City's 14th district.

It was assumed that the GOP nominee didn't have a chance in the Tammany district. As the filing deadline approached, the anticipated Republican sacrificial lamb thought better of the futile gesture and pulled out. Down at the Republican clubhouse, the district leader came out of the back room and yelled, "Who wants to run for Congress?"

"I do!" yelled La Guardia. "Okay," the leader said with a nod, "Put La Guardia down."

But one more snag almost upset the apple cart. The man assigned to fill out nominating petitions asked, "What's the first name?" When La Guardia replied, he threw down his pen and moaned, "Oh, hell, let's at least get somebody whose name we can spell!"

But La Guardia hadn't come this close by accident and wasn't about to be thwarted now. "I am going to spell my name for you. Listen: F-I-O-R-E-L-L-O-L-A-capital-G-U-A-R-D-I-A." For what it was worth, the Republican nomination in the 14th congressional district was his.

Realizing that the organization wouldn't waste resources on what they considered a hopeless race, La Guardia bought a used Ford for \$100, bedecked it with campaign posters and covered every street in the district. He shook every hand he could reach; pounded up and down tenement steps; knocked on doors; and spoke on street corners in Italian, Yiddish and three other languages. As biographer Lawrence Elliott described:

"No Republican had ever waged such a campaign in the 14th. No Republican the people had ever seen even looked or sounded like this one - the son of Italian immigrants who could talk all the district's languages and knew about things that mattered: the cost of a chicken or a piece of meat, the exploitation of working people by bosses and landlords who lived in fancy apartments..."

The fairy tale didn't have a happy ending this time but La Guardia's campaign astonished everyone by slashing the safe Democratic margin to 1,700 votes and winning more votes than any Republican candidate had ever won in that district. At the age of 32, La Guardia was just beginning.



All La Guardia items shown actual size.



Early La Guardia items, including his successful 1919 run for President of the Board of Alderman.

His efforts did not go without recognition by the party, even if it was a bit mystified what to make of him. La Guardia was offered the post of deputy state attorney general. He accepted, but stayed in the city instead of heading for the state capital like most of his colleagues. What's more, he actually tried to enforce the law even when it stepped on the toes of the powerful. Time after time, La Guardia found himself in trouble with his superiors or outmaneuvered by political chicanery. One case serves as an example of New York politics in action. La Guardia brought a case against some important meatpacking houses for violating a new law requiring that all meat packages be marked with the true weight of their contents. The wrappers on hams and bacon seriously overstated the weight and La Guardia anticipated a simple trial.

The defense called State Senator Jimmy Walker. Senator Walker testified that the bill was only meant to apply to glass, wood and tin containers, not the paper wrappings in question. He was an expert witness, of course, because he had been the author of the legislation on which La Guardia's case was based. After La Guardia's case was dismissed, the jovial Walker (who would go on to be mayor) asked the deputy attorney general, "Fiorello, when are you going to get wise?"

La Guardia may never have gotten "wise" the way Walker meant it, but he surely grew smarter. In 1916, he bulldozed aside party resistance and grabbed the congressional nomination in the 14th district again. He worked even harder than before. He seemed to be everywhere in the district, hammering on incumbent Congressman Michael Farley, a Tammany saloonkeeper who kept quiet most of the campaign. Once La Guardia even parked outside Farley's saloon and dared the congressman to come out and debate. When Rep. Farley finally issued a ten point platform, La Guardia gleefully pointed out that eight of the ten issues had already been passed and when the other two had come up for a vote in Congress, Farley had been absent. La Guardia sensed victory was within his grasp. The key issue was to make sure it wasn't stolen on Election Day.

Election morning, La Guardia was up at 5:00 am armed with rolls and coffee. He rounded up residents of Bowery flophouses and marched them to the polls. By the time the Tammany toughs arrived later that morning, they found this normally dependable source of votes had already voted...Republican! When the polls closed, La Guardia had watchers at every precinct. He personally showed up at a tough waterfront precinct that usually produced a 5-to-1 Democratic margin. The astonished local boss, Charlie Culklin, advised him to go home.

"You better sit here and help me watch, Charlie," the fiery Italian replied, "because if it's not an honest count, someone is going to jail. And I mean you."

When the results were released the next morning at 4:00 am, the impossible had happened; a Republican congress-

man was elected from the 14th district. Fiorella La Guardia would be the first Italian-American ever to sit in the U.S. House of Representatives.

The new congressman drew plenty of attention. With the House split evenly between 215 Republicans and 215 Democrats, heavy pressure was put on La Guardia to bolt his party when it came time to vote for a Speaker. Nonetheless, the New Yorker stuck with the GOP despite the fact that the Democrats eventually won with the support of minor party members. During La Guardia's first term, President Woodrow Wilson led the country into World War I.

Although many of his Progressive Republican allies like Senator Robert LaFollette and Senator George Norris bitterly opposed American entry into what they saw as one more war between greedy European monarchies, La Guardia voted Yes on the declaration of war. When later asked if it were true that Montana's Republican Congresswoman Jeanette Rankin was crying when she voted No, La Guardia replied that he didn't know: "I could not see because of the tears in my own eyes."

When the time came to vote for a military draft, La Guardia again voted Yes but felt he couldn't send others if he wasn't willing to go himself. He took a leave of absence from Congress and enlisted in the Army. Having already learned to operate one of the new-fangled flying machines, he joined what was then known as the Aviation Section of the Signal Corps, later to become the Army Air Corps and eventually the U.S. Air Force. The Army took advantage of Captain La Guardia's language skills and sent him to the Italian front where he was soon dividing his time between training and making speeches to large Italian rallies.

When an airplane crash limited his mobility, he turned his usual energy and integrity to other tasks and was soon involved in numerous aspects of the war effort, including a secret mission in neutral Spain. Diplomats shuddered at his informality (at a private dinner with Italy's King Emmanuel III, he called the king "Manny") but La Guardia always got results. When his physical strength returned, he returned to his unit and flew many bombing missions, becoming the commander of all American pilots in Italy with the rank of major. The pride he felt in his military time was seen in the fact that, to the end of his days, his closest friends would address him as "Major."



The rare mirror above is from La Guardia's 1924 race as a Progressive without either major party's support. The tab on the left is in the shape of a military helmet, reflecting his service in World War I.



As the war ended, the absentee congressman returned home to defend his congressional seat. He arrived on October 28 with the election only days away. For once, La Guardia was the favorite. With even the Democratic machine backing him (for the first and last time) as a sign of wartime solidarity, he won an easy victory over an antiwar Socialist opponent. During the short campaign, however, Congressman La Guardia went out of his way to demonstrate respect for his controversial opponent and defend his right to express antiwar views.

With political success under his belt, the congressman found new doors opening. Hoping to capture the Italian vote, the GOP offered La Guardia the 1919 nomination for President of the Board of Aldermen, the second highest post in city government. This time, the party was behind him with money and organizational support. Few expected him to win but win he did, becoming the first non-fusion Republican candidate to win citywide office since the five boroughs merged to form Greater New York City in 1898.

Despite his triumph, his years in that office were darkened by the death of his infant daughter from tuberculosis. His continuing his political independence irritated Republican Governor Nathan Miller so much that the party organization turned on their feisty maverick.

Determined to run for mayor in 1921, La Guardia ran against organization favorite Manhattan Borough President Henry Curran in the GOP primary. He was soundly defeated, failing to carry a single borough. Curran went on to a crushing general election defeat by Tammany Hall.

Rejected at the polls, La Guardia's life began to fall apart in other ways. A war injury flared up and forced him to undergo painful surgery. His wife began to sicken, suffering from the same disease that had killed their daughter only a year before. La Guardia's dear friend, acclaimed tenor Enrico Caruso, died of pleurisy at the age of 48. Returning from presiding at a Caruso memorial service at the Metropolitan Opera House, La Guardia went home to hold the hand of his beloved wife, who died two days later at the age of 26.

He had gone from political triumph and domestic contentment to total disaster in less than two years.

La Guardia's natural energy slowly pulled him out of his black despair. He returned to his practice of law, once again intervening to help the poor. Soon La Guardia was being

boomed as an independent Republican candidate for governor in 1922. To forestall his gubernatorial bid, the party organization offered him the GOP congressional nomination in New York City's 20th district, based in East Harlem.

La Guardia leapt into his new district with his normal reckless energy. In a three-way race with Tammany Democrat Henry Frank and Socialist William Karlin, La Guardia saw the Socialist as the main threat among progressive voters. He warned that a Socialist congressman would be a lone voice in Washington while "I shall go there to work with the progressive group represented by such men as Senator Borah, Johnson, Brookhart and LaFollette, all Republicans." California's Senator Hiram Johnson (TR's 1912 running mate) sent a public telegram to New York: "I know La Guardia and if I had a thousand votes in his district I would cast them all for him."

The campaign in his new district was going well when a last-minute ethnic bombshell went off on October 30. Jewish voters received a postcard signed by "The Jewish Committee." It contained the following message:

The most important office in this country for Judaism is the Congressman...There are three candidates who are seeking your vote: one is Karlin the atheist, the second is the Italian La Guardia, who is a pronounced anti-semitic and Jew hater. Be careful how you vote. Our candidate is Henry Frank, who is a Jew with a Jewish heart..."

Interestingly, La Guardia apparently never considered pointing out that his mother was Jewish. Instead, he responded by passing out Yiddish-language fliers throughout the Jewish neighborhoods. In it, he challenged Henry Frank to a debate "to be conducted by you and me entirely in the Yiddish language." La Guardia, of course, was fluent in Yiddish while his Democratic opponent couldn't speak a word of it. Frank never showed up for the debate so La Guardia took to the street corners giving speeches in Yiddish. The district's rabbis led the applause for the feisty Republican. Despite Tammany Hall's usual vote fraud, he won the congressional seat by 168 votes.

1924 brought a special political challenge to Congressman La Guardia. He had never warmed to President Coolidge and his old hero, Senator Robert LaFollette, was seeking the White House on the Progressive ticket. La Guardia bolted the GOP presidential ticket for the first time, endorsing LaFollette, whom he called "my inspi-

ration and ideal." In reaction, the NYC Republicans denied his renomination and Fiorello had to fight the general election as the candidate of the Progressive Party, running as an independent on the Socialist line. He won re-election with his largest victory margin - nearly 3,500 votes.

He was welcomed back to Congress by the only other congressman elected on the Socialist line, Milwaukee's Victor Berger. Berger announced that La Guardia would function as "my whip." La Guardia bolted from the Socialist Party as well.

La Guardia mended fences with the Republican Party and won re-election in 1926 as a Republican. He needed every vote, as his margin of victory that year was a scant 50 votes. The House GOP caucus rewarded the prodigal son with a long-desired appointment to the House Judiciary Committee. In 1928, La Guardia expressed reservations about Herbert Hoover but stayed in the GOP camp and won another term by 1200 votes. Despite his growing national prestige as a progressive voice in Congress, his district's rapidly changing population meant that he continually needed to win support anew from different groups, as Puerto Ricans moved into East Harlem. La Guardia began to seek the 1929 GOP mayoral nomination in earnest.

La Guardia's allegiance to the GOP was always a bit tentative. As a congressman, he voted with his party on organizational matters but party loyalty went little further. As mayor, he would do nothing to reward the Republican organization that provided the crucial core of his voters. His Republicanism was of the progressive, independent variety and he associated himself with the party of Lincoln and

Theodore Roosevelt (although, interestingly, while working his way up in the party organization, La Guardia had backed Taft over TR during the 1912 bolt). It may be fairly said that La Guardia's choice of party was motivated primarily with disgust at the corruption of Tammany Hall and the Democratic machine.

La Guardia wasn't the only citizen to feel such disgust. The politics of New York City have always featured a strong "reform" element. For a "reform" candidate to upset the entrenched power of Tammany took a fortuitous convergence of factors, including a strong reform candidate, a weak Democrat and some particularly shocking examples of disregard for the public by the Democratic machine.

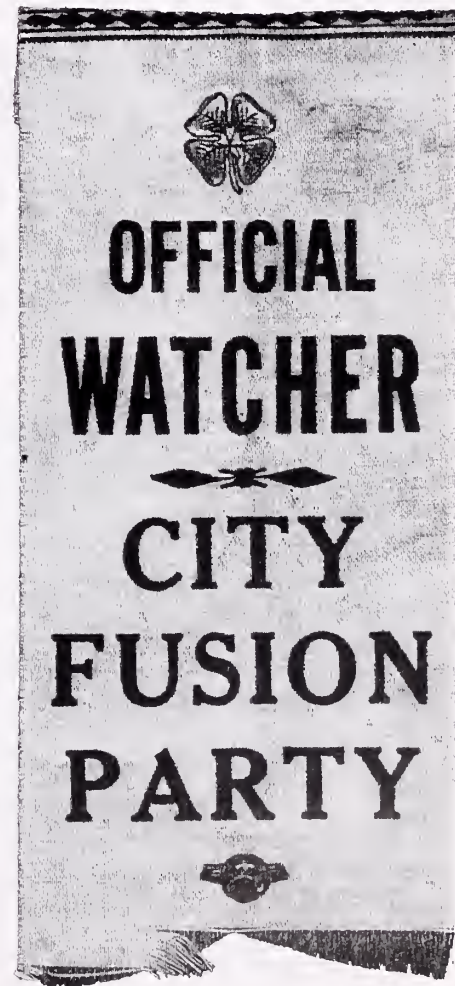
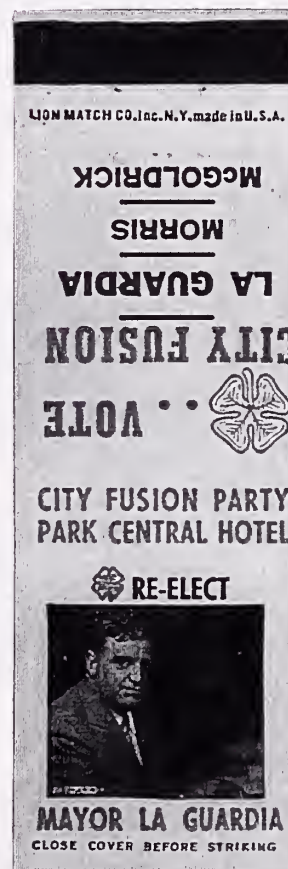
In 1929, those factors were not present. The Democratic incumbent was the flashy Jimmy Walker, whose affair with a glamorous Broadway star was common knowledge and whose work ethic was less than compelling. But "Beau James" seemed to personify the excitement of the Roaring Twenties and, during that boom time, the voters enjoyed the laughs their mayor provided. For those wishing politics of a more earnest nature, Norman Thomas was running for mayor on the Socialist Party ticket.

La Guardia had to fight a skeptical GOP organization for the mayoral nod but, even after winning the nomination, he found that voters didn't care much about his charges of Tammany corruption. His attacks struck many as extreme and irresponsible; things couldn't be as bad as he claimed.

Nothing seemed to click for Fiorello that year. With Mayor Walker spending most of his time on his girlfriend's show career and a renovated casino in Central Park, La



La Guardia ran as a candidate of many parties: Republican, Fusion, Socialist, Progressive, Labor and others, but the 1933 Fusion Party was critical to his election as mayor.





Guardia claimed the city needed a mayor "who will sleep at night and work in the daytime." Beau James just smiled and went out to the clubs in a tuxedo. When La Guardia attacked the mayor for raising his own salary by \$40,000, Walker quipped, "That's cheap! Think what it would cost if I worked full time!"

Growing more desperate, La Guardia even attacked Walker's personal life. Speaking before a receptive crowd at a black church in Harlem, he drew calls of support from the crowd when he promised a "different deal." But it backfired when he attacked Walker's philandering by praising the Lord that "at least some men went home to sleep with their own wives." A voice from the audience called back, "and that ain't so good neither!"

On Election Day, La Guardia managed only 26% of the vote. He lost every single assembly district and even his own congressional district. It was the worst defeat of a major party candidate in the city's modern history. There was only one sign that the future might be different. On October 24, 1929 - one week before the election - the stock market crashed.

As the Great Depression settled on America, Mayor Walker's wisecracks didn't seem nearly so amusing. The Seabury investigation began to expose Tammany Hall's corruption and it turned out that Fiorello La Guardia's campaign attacks hadn't been exaggerated at all. Congressman La Guardia began to look like a prophet. He held onto his congressional seat in 1930, although by his usual narrow margin.

Although best known for his work within the city, La Guardia had established a strong national reputation as a progressive leader in Congress, famed from coast to coast as a vocal and articulate protector of the weak and exploited. In one of those ironic twists of fate, it was the nation's turn to the progressivism he had so long advocated that cost Congressman La Guardia his seat.



The 1932 election that elected New York Governor Franklin Roosevelt president was a Democratic landslide. In La Guardia's district, voter turnout swelled from 18,000 in 1930 to 31,000 in 1932 and almost every new voter was a Democrat. Despite strong support from progressives, Black and Puerto Rican leaders, Congressman Fiorello La Guardia lost his seat by 1200 votes.

He was dispirited and depressed. "It's no use," he told a friend, "they got me at last. I am too old to start over." The downcast mood would pass. Fiorello La Guardia was on the verge of his greatest political victory.

The scandals revealed by Judge Samuel Seabury's investigation had driven Mayor Walker from office but hadn't stopped the machine's control of the city. Once accepted as a necessary evil in a growing, prosperous city, the corruption seemed more starkly venal as the city streets filled with desperate people left unemployed and homeless by the Depression. Converging factors gave reformers hope that Tammany's rule could be broken. Disparate political groups began to unite to form a Fusion Party that would link the minority Republicans with other excluded groups to challenge the Democratic monopoly.

However, many reformers of both the upper class and far-left varieties resisted the idea of La Guardia as their candidate. "If it's La Guardia or bust," insisted one Fusion leader, "I say bust!" But in the end, La Guardia was irresistible.

Fusion Party candidates also appeared on the Republican Party line, allowing voters different vehicles to express their support for the anti-Tammany candidates. La Guardia's first move was to break precedent (and set a new one) by naming an ethnically balanced ticket composed of an Italian, an Irishman, a Jew and a Protestant. Heretofore, Tammany's idea of a balanced ticket had been four Irishmen.

The campaign was a brawl and Fiorello set a frantic pace. Biographer Thomas Kessner described his "frenzied campaign schedule."

Delivering four speeches to each of his opponents' one, arms flung akimbo, rumpled double-breasted jacket flying, shirt unbuttoned, tie askew, hair dropping over his brow, and his voice at his highest screech, Fiorello tore into the opposition...The campaign reached its climax on the night of November 2. From a dozen sections of the city, thousands led by torch-bearing marchers converged on Madison Square Garden. Every seat in the Garden was filled and an estimated overflow of 50,000 clogged the surrounding streets. As Samuel Seabury came on stage, the fusion crowd jumped to its feet, stomping and whistling. The dignified Seabury smiled, adjusted his pince-nez, and delivered a stem-winder, announcing: "The whole country looks to New York City to promote the cause of good government. The hour is ripe for



Left: Although political running mates and allies in the battle against organized crime, conflicting presidential ambitions kept a sharp rivalry between Thomas Dewey and Fiorello La Guardia. Dewey got closer to the White House but neither made it.



**LA GUARDIA
LEVY
NULL**



**AMERICAN
LABOR PARTY
VOTE
ROW C**



**VOTE ROW "C"
FOR
LA GUARDIA**

**Vote on Paper Ballot
FOR COUNCILMAN**

1 | GOLDBERG

2 | ARMSTRONG

3 | DE MATTEO

AMERICAN LABOR PARTY



**LA GUARDIA
McGOLDRICK
MORRIS
LEVY**



VOTE ROW C



The American Labor Party was a key part of a La Guardia coalition spanning elements as diverse as Communists and Wall Street bankers. The ALP later collapsed when liberals broke with communists and formed the Liberal Party, which still exists today.

action. I ask you...strike the blow that will make the city free." Finally, the candidate himself appeared. For ten minutes the Garden was in pandemonium. And he promised them victory.

As always, seeing to a fair vote on Election Day was a fundamental challenge. Democratic toughs, wearing identical pearl-gray fedoras, marched to the polls to "assist" voters. When La Guardia's campaign manager complained to the police about 200 gangsters controlling an assembly district, he was arrested for disorderly conduct. Blackjacks, brass knuckles and lead pipes were in plain view at polling places.

But Fiorello hadn't fought in the trenches of Big Apple politics for nothing. His own forces fanned out across the city. Throughout the day, he raced from polling place to polling place. On East 113th Street, the stocky little candidate pushed his way through a crowd and confronted a burly Tammany ruffian. Yanking a Tammany badge from his lapel, La Guardia snapped "You're a thug. Now get out of here and keep away." He turned on the man's gang: "I know you. You're thugs. You get out of here and keep moving." In the face of genuine courage and passion, the mugs drifted away. Hundreds of such scenes were played out across the city.

No one can tell for sure how many votes Tammany succeeded in stealing that year but it wasn't enough. Fiorello La Guardia was elected Mayor of the City of New York by over a quarter million votes. It was the start of an amazing experiment in urban government.

"Perhaps never before," wrote the *New York Times*, "did a mayor of New York begin his term with such an air of getting down to business and enforcing industry and honesty on the part of every city employee." The *Times* noted with amazement that commissioners were actually "spending a full day at their desks."

The La Guardia myth grew with true story after true story. The mayor appeared to be on duty 24 hours day and seemed to be everywhere. Parks, highways, bridges, docks and other civic projects were built. He built one airport and began another. City services radically improved. He showed up at fires, going into the flames to rescue a trapped fireman; passing motorists with a broken down car, he climbed out of his limousine and helped push their car to a service station; discovering citizens in desperate need, he dug into his own (not well-filled) pockets to pay for food and rent; during a



Republican La Guardia was a strong supporter of Democrat Roosevelt.

newspaper strike, he went on the radio to read the Sunday comics to the city's children; he broke slot machines with a sledgehammer and conducted national symphonies with a baton. When a deranged man attacked him from behind, he instinctually turned and began to pummel him. Bystanders had to drag the short, stout mayor off the younger, larger madman. Fiorello La Guardia was not just a successful mayor; he became a national legend.

Bristling with energy, honesty and abrasiveness, Fiorello guaranteed nearly continual turmoil and his independence made him unpredictable. City politics also became unpredictable. Not only did Fiorello fail to reward the Republicans who supported him; he also failed to back the Fusion Party. During his first four years in office, the Fusion Party lost ground at every election and fell apart. Old allies began to feel as if the Little Flower was only interested in building his own power.

His relationship with the Republican Party was never simple. La Guardia believed the NYC GOP had nowhere else to go and treated party loyalty with indifference. There was no shortage of exciting Republicans in the city at that time (Thomas Dewey and Wendell Willkie, to name just two) but La Guardia's own presidential ambitions made him jealous of any rivals. La Guardia created a close working relationship with FDR and bolted the GOP each time FDR ran for re-election.

As the Fusion Party faded, La Guardia began to build a new party that was almost his own personal vehicle. In 1936, the American Labor Party (ALP) was established, ostensibly to allow reformers and independents a way to vote for Roosevelt without voting Democratic. The ALP would be La Guardia's true ideological home, even as he relied on the Republicans. As the ALP was being formed, Democratic mastermind James Farley warned FDR that La Guardia planned to use it "as a vehicle for his own nomination" and that it would form "the nucleus of a national Labor Party." Of course, no one in American politics was more skilled at political maneuver than Roosevelt. It suited FDR nicely that the nation's largest city stayed out of the hands of his enemies within the Democratic Party.

In the aftermath of FDR's 1936 victory, La Guardia was poised for a triumphant re-election in 1937. Resentful Republicans knew that their mayor might be stingy with patronage, but they received more than the Democrats would give them. The ALP provided the vehicle for leftist enthusiasts while ordinary citizens, indifferent to ideology, were quite aware that city government was being run on their behalf for nearly the first time. Democrats cast about for a candidate, finally settling on state supreme court justice Jeremiah Mahoney.

Poor Mahoney, trying hard to find an issue on which to attack the mayor, called La Guardia a Communist (perhaps the first time a major Republican candidate has been called a Communist by his Democratic opponent) but the mayor's support ran from communists to conservatives because he had delivered the best city government NYC that had ever experienced. On Election Day, the Little Flower swept to a landslide with more than 1.3 million votes to Mahoney's less than 890,000.

With FDR in his second - and expected final term - New York's mayor began to actively eye the White House. Harold Ickes - FDR's Secretary of the Interior and top political advisor - openly speculated about a La Guardia presidential run. A survey in *Fortune* magazine showed him near the top of



An anti-La Guardia cartoon from 1941 showing the unlikely alliance that kept him in city hall for twelve years.

popular favorites for 1940. His face was on the cover of *Time* and *Newsweek*. His fellow mayors elected him president of the U.S. Conference of Mayors (a post he held for ten years).

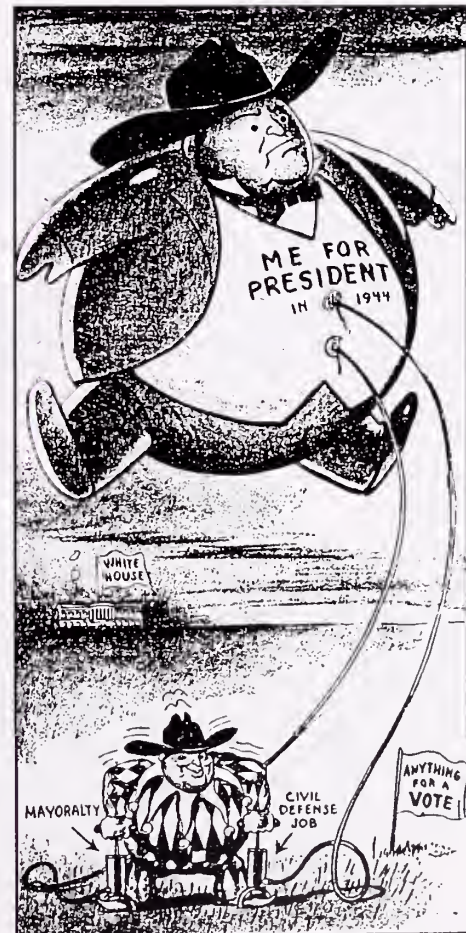
All indications were that the Little Flower would be a strong contender if he made it to the ballot, but as the candidate of which party? Republicans were hardly enamored of their maverick, especially when he backed Democratic Governor Herbert Lehman in his narrow 1938 victory over challenger Thomas Dewey. The Democrats, meanwhile, had plenty of their own candidates. Wisconsin's Governor Phil LaFollette, elected as the candidate of the Progressive Party (as was his brother, U.S. Senator Robert LaFollette, Jr.) called for the formation of a national progressive party and invited La Guardia to a national conference. La Guardia declined and, on a speaking tour of the West, assured listeners "there will be no third party."

When 1940 arrived, La Guardia remained in limbo. FDR grabbed the Democratic nomination for a third term bid while the GOP also made a surprising choice, a progressive leader from New York City who sometimes supported Democrats. But it wasn't Fiorello — it was Wendell Willkie. According to some observers, Willkie would have liked to have La Guardia as his running mate (the constitutional problem solved by having Willkie run from his home state, Indiana) but decided against it for fear that the unpredictable Little Flower might decline publicly and endorse Roosevelt. La Guardia did endorse Roosevelt that year and wound up with numerous important assignments from the administration as the country moved towards, and into, war. But FDR's promise of an appointment as Secretary of War never came through.

Back in the city, La Guardia's ego and emotional temperament had alienated many key supporters but he remained the sole alternative to the return of Tammany Hall. In 1941, he claimed that he didn't want an unprecedented third four-year term but yielded to a well-staged draft and jumped into his re-election campaign with his usual verve. Democratic hopeful William O'Dwyer tried the usual themes - taxes were too high, too many radicals in city government, too much of the mayor's time spent in Washington - but he couldn't connect with a solid punch. Even President Roosevelt came on board. In typical FDR fashion, he stated at a press conference that he had no intention of taking sides in the NYC mayoral race and then went on to express the "opinion" that La Guardia had given the city the "most honest...most efficient municipal government of any." Despite La Guardia's lack of support in 1940, Wendell Willkie gave the mayor a gracious endorsement as well.

But La Guardia's self-righteousness cost him with many voters, especially when he bitterly attacked Democratic Governor Herbert Lehman for the not particularly outrageous act of endorsing the Democratic ticket. Historian Thomas Kessner states that "New Yorkers were becoming tired of politics with the volume turned up. La Guardia managed to make a close contest of what had been a sure victory."

The vote may have been unexpectedly close but Fiorello La Guardia was still the first three-term mayor in the city's



La Guardia wanted the White House but his insurgent posture as a Republican supporting Democrats ensured that neither party would ever nominate him for President.

history, despite running on the Republican and ALP tickets in a city where more than 70% of the voters were Democrats.

La Guardia suffered the weakness of many politicians who have been in office too long. As his administration went on for twelve years, his early virtues began to be overshadowed by the corrosion of power. His once-strong commitment to civil liberties faded into a indifference to police brutality; his personalized, temperamental style drove many honest and skilled managers from his administration; the demands of other national posts he held for FDR distracted him from city affairs.

Time was also at work on the era of progressive movement that had made Fiorello what he was. By 1945, Robert LaFollete was long dead, as were Borah, Johnson and Norris. Al Smith, Wendell Willkie and even FDR himself had died as well. Thirty years and two world wars had gone by since the feisty young man first ran for Congress. In a tribute to Senator George Norris, an aging La Guardia may have been talking about himself when he said, "You see, he was an insurgent and the life of an insurgent in American politics is an unhappy one."

His third term was over in 1945 and La Guardia wasn't sure of what to do. His American Labor Party was in shambles, split by battles between liberals and communists. The liberals bolted to form the Liberal Party, determined not to

endorse La Guardia for a fourth term.

But other reformers feared that there was no alternative to the old war-horse as Tammany Hall was still waiting to recapture the riches of city hall. But there just wasn't another campaign in the small body though his bravado was still there. Despite the fact that not a single party in the city was offering him its nomination, he quoted Al Smith: "I can run on a laundry ticket and beat these political bums any time."

But La Guardia's day was over. He couldn't bring himself to support a viable replacement and split the anti-Tammany forces. Eventually Tammany Democrat William O'Dwyer ran on the Democratic and ALP lines against Jonah Goldstein (a Democrat running on the Republican and Liberal tickets) and Newbold Morris (a La Guardia-backed independent running on the No-Deal Party label). Despite indications that he had ties to organized crime, O'Dwyer carried his whole ticket to a landslide victory. Once again, the patient machine had survived a period of reform politics to reclaim its natural power.

As the final days of his term passed, La Guardia still worked with his usual vigor and snap. On his last day in office, an aide found him late at night in the dark and empty city hall, typing letters. Less than two years later, the greatest mayor in the history of America's greatest city was dead.★

As the 1888 cartoon from *Puck* below shows, NYC's bare-knuckled politics have often drawn national attention.



A PLAIN DUTY.

Puck.—Fellow Citizens, that is a very pretty local fight over there – but don't let your attention be distracted from the necessity of voting for Cleveland, Thurman and Tariff Reform!



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The legacy of Fiorello La Guardia was still powerful twenty years after he left office. In 1965, Republican/fusion candidate John Lindsay tried to wrap himself in La Guardia's mantle.

MAYOR JOHN LINDSAY OF NYC

– A REVISIONIST VIEW –

By Paul Peter Jesep



John Vliet Lindsay's record as a maverick Republican Congressman (1958-1966), two term mayor of New York City (1966-1974), and 1972 presidential candidate, has made him a controversial leader. New York's 103rd mayor has been out of office for twenty-five years, but his legacy is still passionately debated. Sadly, a definitive biography of this committed city administrator and tireless champion of civil rights, civil liberties, and social justice has yet to be written.

In 1958, Lindsay, a young lawyer and World War II naval veteran, challenged incumbent GOP Congressman Frederic Coudert in Manhattan's 17th Congressional "Silk Stocking" district, which included Greenwich Village, the United Nations, Times Square, and Central Park.

Coudert, having become tired of public service, bowed out, not wanting to face a tough primary. The Republican establishment, leery of Lindsay's temperament, quickly chose Elliott H. Goodwin as heir to Coudert's seat. Lindsay was already making too many waves because of his vocal criticism for Joseph McCarthy's Communist witch-hunts. Thanks to an oiled political machine, Goodwin obtained three petition signatures for every one Lindsay received to get placed on the ballot.

However, Lindsay had the support of Herbert Brownell, Republican National Chairman and the U.S. Attorney General under Eisenhower, a close personal friend and former advisor to popular three-term governor Thomas E. Dewey. Mrs. Wendell Willkie later joined with Brownell to sing the praises of this spirited independent thinker in the primary. On a humid, oppressive August night in 1958, Lindsay beat the establishment candidate with 6,163 votes to 4,003.

For the general election, Tammany Hall boss Carmine

DeSapio handpicked Anthony Akers to defeat the patriotic graduate from Yale. Akers stood on street corners. Lindsay walked many flights of stairs in multi-story apartment buildings. Akers blasted Eisenhower's policies. Lindsay talked about local issues like providing affordable housing to the hard pressed middle class.

"I have every intention," Lindsay declared, "of exploding the myth that the Democratic Party is the party of the average man. I expect to lay out proof that the Republican Party and I, as its candidate, will stand for progressive measures designed to further the freedom and security of the individual."

With the help of a surprise *New York Times*' endorsement, the pragmatic-progressive Republican Lindsay easily won the general election by 53,674 to 45,956 votes.

In January 1959, Lindsay had been seated in the Eighty-sixth Congress for less than a month when he garnered national attention. Twelve-term Republican Congressman Noah Mason from Illinois, took the floor to offer a diatribe against the Warren Court. Old guard southern Democrats cheered.

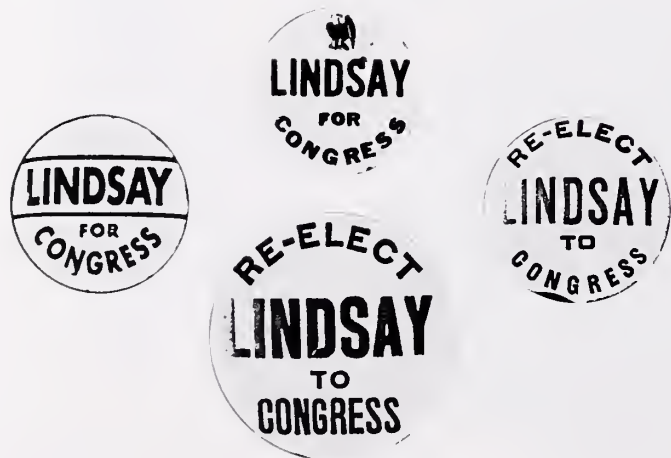
Lindsay, as he often did, broke with protocol. He rose to denounce the speech of his senior colleague. "I will defend as long as I have voice in my body the jurisdiction of the Supreme Court," Lindsay proclaimed, "in every area involving the personal rights and liberties of our people...historians will write that this Supreme Court is one of the great courts of our country..." Civil libertarians loved it.

His militancy and defense of individual rights accented Lindsay's entire tenure in Congress. He repeatedly criticized Attorney General Robert Kennedy for his disregard for civil liberties and taunted President John F. Kennedy, all but calling him a hypocrite, for not fulfilling promises to further civil rights. Eighteen months after John Kennedy took office, Lindsay caustically observed: "I am becoming more and more concerned about this Administration's disregard for personal liberties."

Days after President Kennedy's death, Lindsay insisted, with righteous temerity, that Congress stay in session to pass expanded civil rights legislation "as a tribute to the president." The *Village Voice* dubbed Lindsay the "Congressman from the Constitution."

Lindsay's re-elections to U.S. House of Representatives were generally uneventful. He won each time with increasing majorities.

His 1964 re-election campaign, however, attracted media attention from coast to coast. Lindsay denounced Barry Goldwater. Unlike Republican Governor Nelson Rockefeller, Lindsay and GOP U.S. Senators Jacob Javits and Ken Keating of New York refused to back the national ticket. William F. Buckley's *National Review* noted that the Conservative Party had "assigned top priority to Lindsay's defeat for any office he seeks."



A selection of buttons from John Lindsay's congressional campaigns: despite the Democratic preponderance in his district, his margin of victory grew with each election.

The editors also promised Lindsay “the implacable hostility of the many friends of Barry Goldwater.” The Conservatives had good reason to fear him. With Goldwater’s defeat all but certain Lindsay was widely being touted as a GOP presidential nominee — a Conservative’s worst nightmare.

“The District’s Pride — The Nation’s Hope,” became Lindsay’s campaign slogan. He ran against Democrat Eleanor Clark French, cousin of Nelson Rockefeller’s first wife and cousin of U.S. Senator Joe Clark of Pennsylvania. For the first time he also faced a Conservative Party candidate, Kieran O’Doherty, the *National Review*’s darling.

Lindsay’s attitude toward the Goldwater ticket cost him the Republican National Committee’s financial support. It didn’t matter. Lindsay had a solid hold on the district. Lyndon Baines Johnson carried the 17th congressional district by 70,000 votes. Lindsay and his brand of Republicanism triumphed by a comfortable 90,000 votes. He received 135,000 votes to 44,000 for French and 9,500 for O’Doherty.

Lindsay basked in the limelight. But now he faced one of his greatest political decisions. Pressure mounted on him to assert himself on the national stage. His options were limited.

Gov. Rockefeller intended to seek a third term in 1966. In 1968, Republican Sen. Jacob Javits would run for re-election and Democratic Sen. Bobby Kennedy wasn’t up for re-election until 1970.

Running for mayor of New York was his only option for advancement but advisors warned Lindsay that, even if he won, it would be a political graveyard.

The city’s finances were already sliding into the abyss. In 1953, then Governor Thomas E. Dewey thought New York City’s finances were so mismanaged that he publicly supported using a city manager in place of the strong mayor form of government.

Dewey lamented that New York flirted with bankruptcy despite having introduced six new taxes since 1945 and increased existing taxes eight times. The situation hadn’t improved much when Lindsay decided to run for mayor in 1965. Rockefeller shared Dewey’s angst.

Lindsay believed passionately that the nation’s future rested in its bustling, diverse, dynamic cities — not sleepy suburbs with neat, manicured lawns. Today, as revitalized cities like New York, Philadelphia, and Los Angeles suggest

— Lindsay was right.

Despite Democratic Mayor Robert Wagner’s decision not to seek a fourth term, prospects for the forty-three year old congressman looked grim. New York had 2,400,000 registered Democrats and only 700,000 registered Republicans plus 60,000 registered Liberals. Knowing how heavily outnumbered Republicans were in one of the nation’s Democratic bastions, he ran simply as “Lindsay.”



Upper right: Brochure from his 1964 congressional race (60% of original size), Above: Some of the first buttons issued in Lindsay’s 1965 race for mayor simply read “Lindsay Button.” When a rival kept referring to him as “Lindsley” jokesters put out the “Lindsley Button.” On the far right is a coattail item.



A selection of 1965 items: Upper left is a Liberal Party button with his citywide running mates. The button in the center of the bottom row shows a green diamond on a white background. It was given to special guests on election night and allowed entry to the upper rooms of Lindsay's headquarters.

Even with Jacob Javits as campaign chair, Lindsay's GOP pedigree was noticeably absent from campaign material.

He based his campaign theme on a word used in Disney's "Mary Poppins" movie to describe the energy, dynamism, inclusiveness, and innovation he sought to give the city. The phrase said it all — "*John V. Lindsay is Supercalifragilisticexpialidocious.*"

That was Lindsay: bright, refreshing, charismatic, courageous. He exemplified the sophistication of a great city that had become tired, worn, and tarnished. Lindsay offered renewal and, most importantly, hope. Entertainment flair was added with the active support of Lionel Hampton, Sammy Davis Jr. and Liza Minnelli.

Lindsay walked Harlem and the South Bronx. He visited some of the most economically depressed sections of the city. For the first time in many years New York's most disadvantaged citizens, who almost always voted Democratic but were usually taken for granted, felt that someone cared.

In the general election, Lindsay, as the GOP candidate with the endorsement of the Liberal Party and widespread support from the Village Independent Democrats, battled Democratic nominee and City Controller Abe Beame along with Conservative Party nominee William F. Buckley. A slew of lesser known candidates also ran for mayor in the nation's largest city.

The campaign was hard-fought. Beame faced constant charges that he was a patsy of Tammany Hall. Young Buckley supporters and John Birch Society members often followed Lindsay with signs reading, "Lef—tee, Lin—zee," "When I grow up I'll be true to my party," and "Color him pink because he's a fink." The police did little to keep picketers at a distance. Lindsay had earned their scorn for promising a civilian review board to oversee the police. Buckley detractors issued a campaign button with the slogan — "Buckley for Halloween."

On Wednesday, November 3, 1965, at about 2 a.m., the *Herald Tribune* hit the streets with the news that Lindsay had won. He beat Beame by 102,000 votes with 46% of the vote. Beame came in at 41% and Buckley with 13%.

Oliver Pilat, a key aide in the Lindsay camp, wrote as his last diary entry of the campaign, "John Lindsay would rule an almost bankrupt metropolis facing almost incurable problems."

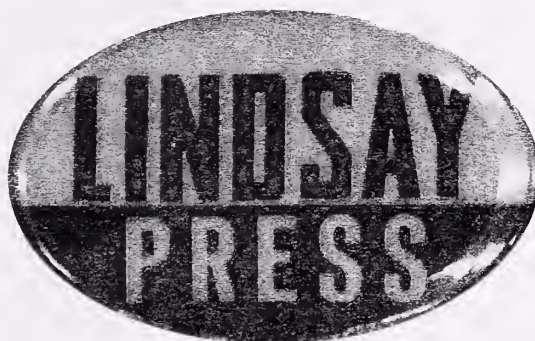
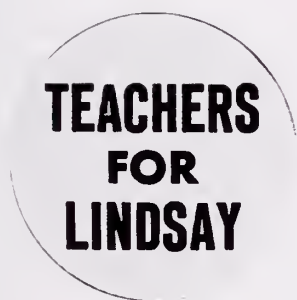
On January 1, 1966, within hours of taking the oath of office on the steps of City Hall, and just after Broadway superstar Ethel Merman belted out the national anthem, Lindsay faced a budget deficit of over \$200 million and his first crisis — the infamous transit strike. Five million people, dependent on public transportation operated by 36,000 municipal employees, fended for themselves for twelve days. Approximately 6,000 subway cars and 2,300 buses stood idle. At the inaugural ball, Sammy Davis Jr. complimented Lindsay for achieving the impossible — completely ridding the subways of crime in a few short hours.

Every day the dashing mayor toured the city showing support for his people. He ate hot dogs with fellow New Yorkers at street vendor carts and chatted with throngs of supporters who urged him to fight on. He gave special attention to poorer sections of the City by walking extensively in economically depressed neighborhoods.

The pressure from the private sector on Lindsay to cut a deal at any price mounted daily. Merchants realized losses of approximately \$35 million a day. The city coughed-up another \$1.5 million a day in police overtime. New York also lost millions due to a drop in the retail sales tax, business gross receipts, corporate stock transfers, and in real estate taxes because commercial and residential construction stopped.

Lindsay settled the strike with a 15% salary increase over two years. Theodore Kheel, a highly respected labor attorney who served as mediator, contended that the size of the increase was an effort to address the discrepancy between the wages of skilled (primarily white) and unskilled (primarily black) workers. Union boss, Mike Quill, feared that open discussion about wage disparity would exacerbate





Note the large number of "Democrats for Lindsay" buttons. The "Vote Column A" button in the second row is a rare Republican Lindsay button.



racial tension already quite high in the city. Hence, he pushed for a large wage increase for everyone.

The Executive Vice President of the Commerce and Industry Association of New York observed, "Here was a man totally without experience in dealing with this sort of thing. But I'm very pleased how he's stood the test of this genuine trial by fire. Both the TWU and other big unions thought they could shake him up and win new concessions, but he refused to be shook."

Long after the strike a journalist for *Time* magazine reflected, "The growth of militant civil service unions, a cause of both strikes and higher budgets, is a nationwide phenomenon — and was actually encouraged by Lindsay's Democratic predecessor, Robert Wagner . . . Wagner's cozy policy was to pay them most of what they wanted, thus piling up huge due-bills without much thought of the future."

In July 1966, within months of the transit strike settlement; Lindsay dealt with his first racial problem. In east New York, a small triangular park that served as a boundary between a black and white neighborhood, was "violated" by a group of teenagers. Lindsay didn't immediately receive word of the crisis. The city never had an apparatus to tell the chief executive about such problems.

When Lindsay did learn of the potentially explosive situation he immediately went to east New York. Whites yelled, "Go back to Africa, Lindsay, and take your niggers with you." Others shouted, "Two, four, six, eight! We don't want to integrate!" After discussions with both sides, including a group calling itself SPONGE (Society for the Prevention of Negroes Getting Everything), no riot occurred.

Lindsay, despite the strong advice against such a move, brought warring whites and blacks to City Hall. The mayor watched the groups scream racial obscenities at one another and at himself. After a long session, however, they finally understood the Mayor's message — "you're either going to die or we could do something about it."

On April 4, 1968, the Mayor's leadership was tested

again with the killing of Martin Luther King, Jr. The hopes and dreams of many African-Americans vanished that night. In Washington, the worst fires since the War of 1812 came dangerously close to the Congress while soldiers were stationed at the Capitol and White House.

Approximately 4,000 Tennessee National Guardsmen patrolled Nashville. Another 4,000 Guardsmen were ordered into Memphis. But neither federal troops nor National Guardsmen were used in New York City.

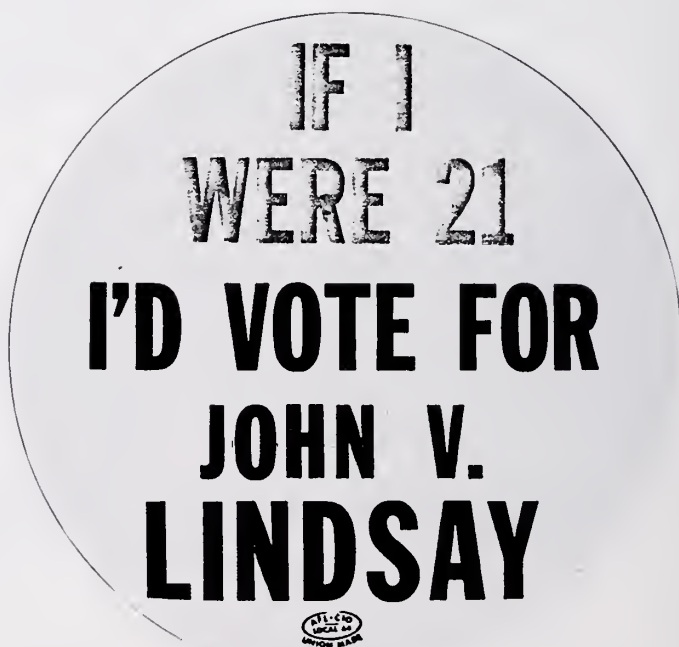
Seven died in Chicago. Mayor Richard Daley decreed, "shoot to kill arsonists and shoot to maim or cripple looters." Lindsay commented the same day, "We happen to think that protection of life, particularly innocent life, is more important than protection of property or anything else . . . we are not going to shoot children in New York City."

While governors, big city mayors, Sen. Bobby Kennedy, and President Lyndon Johnson hid behind National Guardsmen or federal troops — John Vliet Lindsay, a white patrician, walked the streets of Harlem, the nation's largest black and African-American community, and embraced the people. He did so without a police escort. Hundreds stood on the streets. Many wept as the voice of Dr. King boomed from speakers.

John 50X Shabazz, a follower of black activist Malcolm X commented, "that Lindsay — he's beautiful. He's got to carry on the work of Martin Luther King." One Lindsay advisor later recalled that actor Marlon Brando accompanied the Mayor on one of his walking tours in Harlem, "and people responded more enthusiastically to Lindsay than to Brando."

His competent handling of one crisis after another made him a viable consideration by Richard M. Nixon as a running mate in 1968. But hard-core conservatives quickly killed the draft Lindsay movement.

In Lindsay's first term, Gov. Nelson Rockefeller, with whom the Mayor competed to lead the progressive wing of





the GOP, dangled before the Mayor an appointment to fill the vacancy created because of Sen. Robert Kennedy's death. The Governor wanted Lindsay to publicly crawl to Albany and ask for the appointment. As much as Lindsay wanted the job, he refused to beg.

In his first four years as mayor, Lindsay infuriated the Irish dominated fire and police departments by demanding that minorities be aggressively recruited into the ranks. The white middle class, the largest segment of voters, felt betrayed and abandoned as he crusaded for the construction of low income housing in their neighborhoods and sought to raise taxes to pay for it.

Teachers, often white, were frightened as Lindsay insisted that school districts be decentralized to enable thousands of African-American and Hispanic parents greater participation in the education of their children. Welfare programs for the indigent were expanded — as were revenue-raising schemes.

During his eight years as mayor New York swelled with the working poor from the south. By the third year of his first term, 40% more people were collecting social assistance.

In 1969, this unrest and uncertainty, much of it beyond Lindsay's control, contributed to his defeat in the Republican mayoral primary to State Senator John Marchi of Staten Island. Lindsay also lost due to self-confidence. He expected that the rank and file would give him the party's stamp of approval. Lindsay won Manhattan, but lost all four of the other boroughs. His base constituency of gays, minorities, liberals, and the economic disadvantaged, among others, were overwhelmingly Democratic and could not cast a vote in the primary.

Lindsay battled for political survival as the Liberal Party's nominee. State Senator Marchi and City Controller Procaccino, the Democratic candidate, were considerably more conservative than Lindsay. Marchi pledged to voters, "education, peace and tranquility in the schools. When

elected, I will deal with the agitators and rabble-rousers with a firm hand. Permissiveness in the schools will be a thing of the past." Procaccino pledged an end to bringing "low-class people into middle-class neighborhoods." Lindsay reminded New Yorkers that the City's progressive culture was at stake.

During the campaign, Lindsay contended that a mayor had to be "an activist...willing to use the power of his office in order to lead." Marchi thought a mayor should "build-up...consensus" among people. Procaccino believed that a mayor should "stand in the middle of an opposing conflict, to act as mediator first."

While Lindsay's opponents manipulated voter emotions, the Mayor had a list of accomplishments to campaign on. In three and a half years Lindsay not only kept racial peace, but he expanded the police force, opened government up to more people, reduced air pollution by 30%, initiated Sunday garbage collection, and introduced air conditioned buses and subways. The Liberal Party candidate won re-election with 981,900 votes to Procaccino's 821,924, and Marchi's 545,088. Even former Mayor Robert Wagner, who lost to the more conservative Procaccino in the 1969 Democratic primary, cast his vote in the general election for Lindsay.

Not swayed or influenced by the number of votes against him, Lindsay continued his progressive activism throughout the next four years. In his second term, national and international events continued to have a negative impact on New York.

The Arab-Israeli wars caused huge increases in the price of oil. Hence, the cost of living and doing business in the New York skyrocketed. In 1971, the price of oil jumped from \$1.80 to \$2.18. Three years later the price of oil sold at \$11.65 a barrel.

In 1970, the United States had the lowest productivity rate of all industrialized nations. In the first half of 1971, wholesale prices reached an 8% annual rate. This material-



ized in a 40% increase in the price of carrots, a 14% increase for the price of fish, and a 25% increase by the United States Postal Service. One year later food prices rose by 22%. The inflation rate reached an annual rate of 9%.

The Vietnam War also caused Lindsay problems. He blasted President Richard Nixon's continuation of the war. The criticism earned him the title, "the Red Mayor." Some offered to buy him and Jane Fonda a one way ticket to Asia.

Social welfare rolls continued to balloon in his second term. With the escalation of the Vietnam War, funding from Washington dried up for social programs. At roughly the same time, the white middle class started to leave for the suburbs. Tax revenue dropped further.

Half way into his second term, Lindsay did the unforgivable. he bolted from the party, refusing to stand his ground and fight the increasingly powerful Conservative wing and Dixiecrats who now called themselves Republicans.

John Vliet Lindsay — sometimes the only person to shout "Nay!" in the chamber of the United States House of Representatives during a voice vote — deserted his calling as the great crusader for social justice within the Republican party. The social conscience of the GOP had lost one its loudest and most eloquent voices.

In 1972, he made an unsuccessful bid for the

Democratic presidential nomination. His national stature had fizzled. His presidential campaign ended almost as soon as it began.

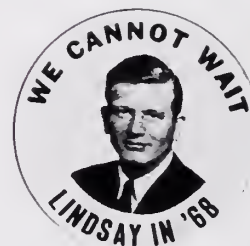
Ironically, the send off Lindsay received during his last days as mayor in 1973 is comparable to the ambivalent feelings that many still harbor for him. He went to many depressed neighborhoods to say goodbye. Residents received him warmly.

He ventured into Corona and Forest Hills where the mainly Italian and Jewish residents were furious at his earlier attempts to introduce low-income minority housing. A resident, one of the very few, acknowledged his bravery and forgave him. At a police precinct, officers gave Lindsay a minimum of courtesy refusing to even stand when he entered.

In the South Bronx, an official in a drug rehabilitation center told the Mayor, "You made a difference to blacks and Puerto Ricans in this city. You made us part of this city as never before."

Two years after Lindsay left office, New York City's fiscal affairs were in shambles. Abe Beame, the Democratic City Controller, had succeeded Lindsay. As a result, the last budget Lindsay submitted was considered Mayor-elect

LINDSAY
FOR PEACE IN VIETNAM
LINDSAY
FOR PEACE IN AMERICA
LINDSAY
FOR PRESIDENT IN 1968

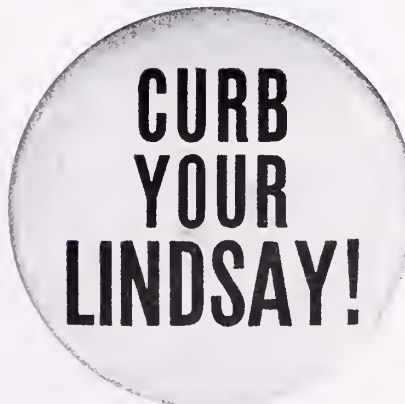
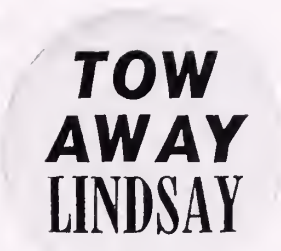
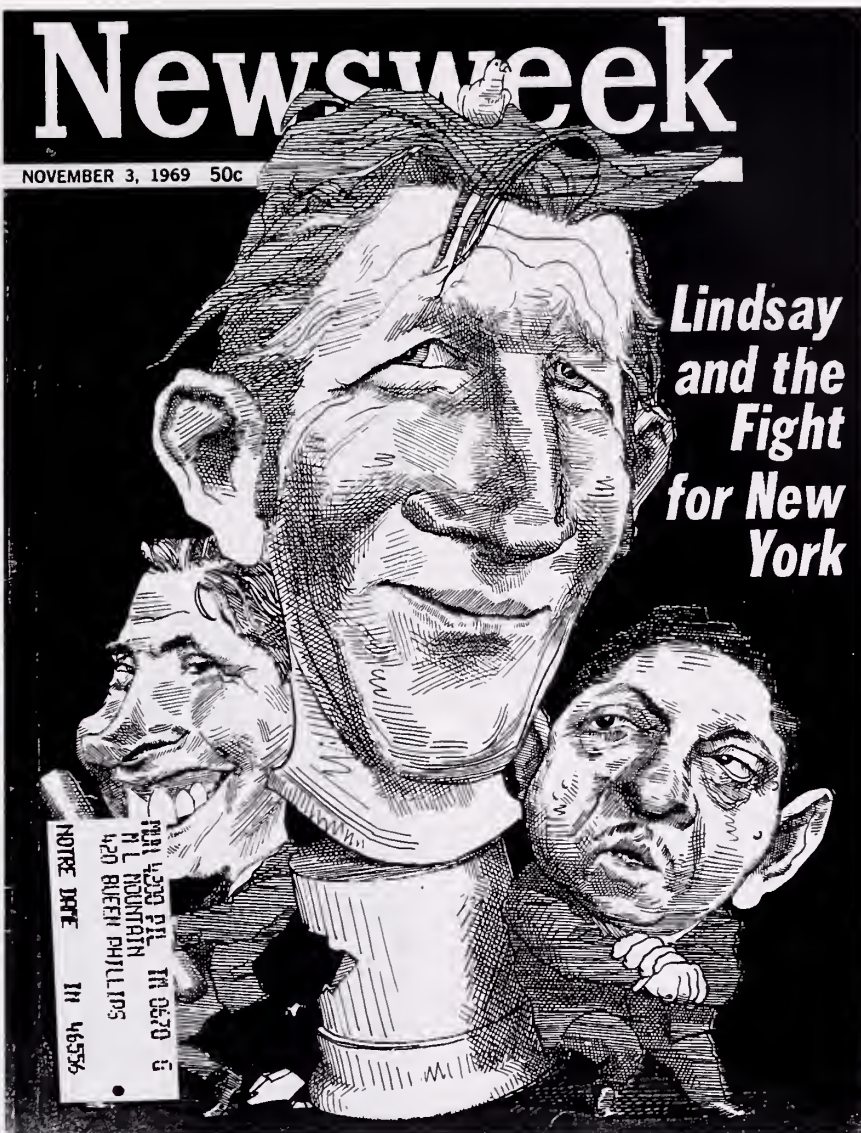
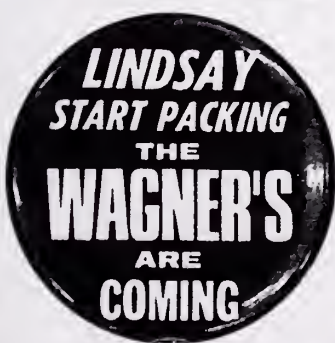
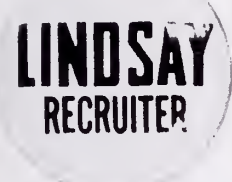


**LINDSAY
 FOR
 PRESIDENT**

**VOTE
 LINDSAY
 FOR
 PEACE**

**STUDENTS
 FOR
 LINDSAY**

Items from the 1968 presidential campaign. The RWB flier (reduced to 60%) and the "Students for Lindsay" button came from the University of Notre Dame mock convention.



Lindsay was a controversial mayor, as seen in this selection of buttons. The *Newsweek* cover shows his 1969 rivals: Republican John Marci (left) and Democrat Mario Procaccino (right).

Beame's work. Well into Beame's term, the new mayor acknowledged a fiscal crisis for the first time. Many observers have noted that had Beame dealt with the growing deficit early on, the problem would have been quite manageable. But still Lindsay's detractors unfairly blame him for the fiscal turmoil that resulted.

In 1980, Lindsay ran for U.S. Senate in the Democratic primary against Elizabeth Holtzman and Bess Meyerson. He encountered disappointing results. Holtzman won the Democratic nod but faced a confusing general election. Aging and ill, Sen. Javits lost the GOP primary to Alphonse D'Amato but ran in the general election as the Liberal party nominee. In a three-way race, D'Amato won one of the closest senatorial elections in New York history.

Lindsay's mayoral legacy remains in dispute because he led in a period of significant upheaval and conflict. Rampant inflation, labor protests, racial riots, oil shortages, the evolution of gay pride, protests against the Vietnam War, and the assassinations of President John Kennedy, Senator Robert Kennedy, and Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., gripped the nation's soul during the 1960s and early 1970s.

He added to this instability with a spirited social agenda demanding further change when most wanted security and continuity. The Mayor's impatience and righteous indignation necessitated that the injustice minorities and the economically disadvantaged suffered be eradicated overnight.

History will be far kinder to Lindsay than the current public temperament would suggest. He energized many New Yorkers with his style, hope, and self-confidence. He kept millions of people from varied ethnic, racial, and religious backgrounds together during an era of tremendous social unrest and economic uncertainty.

The Mayor provided many New Yorkers with a renewed sense of pride that they still lived in the "Empire City." Some nostalgic New Yorkers remember a kind of Camelot under his leadership. John V. Lindsay was the great dreamer, the eternal optimist, and to many, the courageous knight, who used the sword of justice, despite the political consequences, to right the many social and racial wrongs in a cold, troubled, complicated world.★

Paul Peter Jesep is a national vice president of the Ripon Society, a Washington think tank of moderate and progressive Republicans. Based in New Hampshire, he is author of three books and a frequent political commentator on national issues. He can be reached at www.jesep.com.

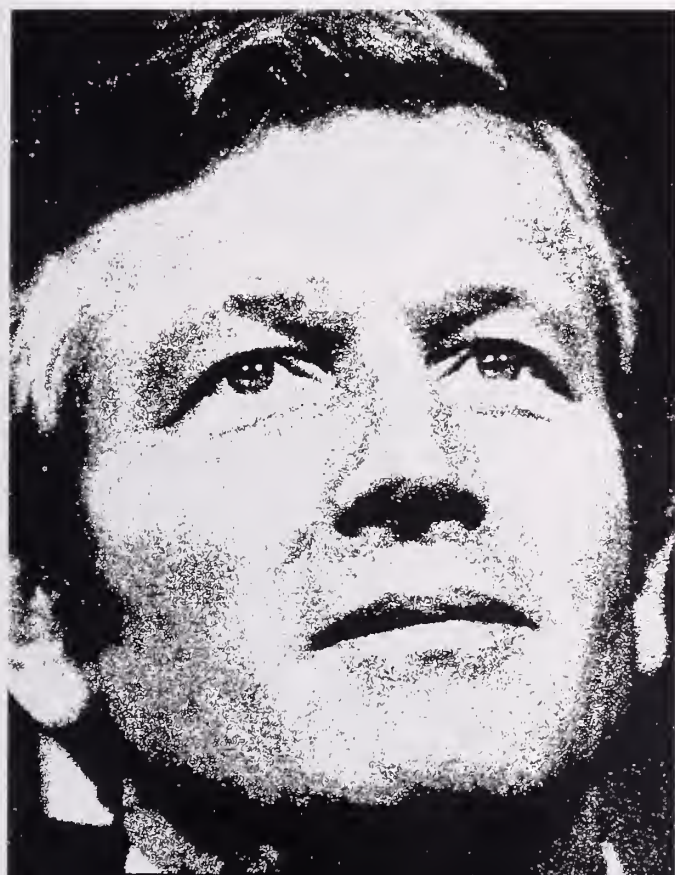


"That does it! I'm voting for Procaccino!"



A *New Yorker* cartoon (top) reflects the frustration level any incumbent faces at re-election time. The litho buttons pictured above featuring Lindsay and his 1969 citywide slate come in a variety of colors. The bumper sticker below reflects the same theme.

Mayor Lindsay



**While
Washington
talks about
problems,
John Lindsay
fights to
solve them.**



A selection of material from Lindsay's 1972 presidential bid as a Democrat. There were plenty of "Democrats for Lindsay" buttons from his Republican days (see page 17) but one wonders if there are any "Republicans for Lindsay" buttons from his Democratic time.

The Fusion Mayors of New York

by Michael Kelly

In this century, only five men have been elected Mayor of New York City without the support of the Democratic Party. Each is a special story. Elsewhere in this issue we look at Fiorello La Guardia and John Lindsay. This article looks at the others.

As a new century dawned in 1900, what we now know as New York City was a newly merged entity, composed of the old New York (mainly Manhattan) plus adjacent cities like Brooklyn. In 1897 — the first mayoral election of Greater New York — the Tammany Hall political machine shook off its loss of William ("Boss") Tweed and elected Robert Van Wyck mayor over businessman Seth Low, the candidate of the Citizens Union and Republican parties. The Van Wyck administration was quickly shaken by scandal, including a conspiracy to inflate milk prices. Governor Theodore Roosevelt declined petitions to remove Van Wyck from office but Seth Low and the reformers were energized to challenge Tammany Hall at the next election.

Seth Low was president of Columbia University and had served as Mayor of Brooklyn before consolidation of the boroughs. He was the first mayor to be elected on a fusion ticket, running on both the Republican and Citizens Union lines. The Low administration's integrity and efficiency stood in stark contrast to his Tammany predecessor, introducing civil service, lowering taxes while improving government services, improving the schools and reducing police corruption. But such accomplishments couldn't overcome the raucous politics of the city. "I was elected on an anti-vice ticket," Low later noted, "but I couldn't be re-elected on a pro-virtue ticket." He fell after one term to George McClellan, son of the Civil War general who had challenged Abraham Lincoln in the presidential election of 1864.

Out of office, Low remained active as a labor mediator and defender of trade unions. A sign of the respect Seth Low commanded was seen at his funeral where his pallbearers included banker J.P. Morgan and labor leader Samuel Gompers.

Tammany Hall struggled with Low's successors. McClellan turned out to be too independent to follow orders and his successor, William Gaynor (see the Summer 1998 Keynoter),



proved even pricklier for the political bosses. Gaynor, however, died two months before the 1913 election. In the resulting confusion, another fusion candidate was able to overcome Tammany and win city hall: John Purroy Mitchel. Only 35 when elected, Mitchel was nicknamed the "boy mayor." His inauguration speech was remarkable in its absence of bold promises. Instead, he placed a three-month moratorium on public statements by anyone in city government, promising to "develop our program slowly."

The result was one of the city's cleanest and most effective administrations. Once again, the novelty of honest government wasn't enough to earn a fusion mayor a sec-

ond term and Tammany Hall grabbed city hall back in 1917. A year later, former Mayor Mitchel enlisted in the Army Air Corp to fight in World War I. A few days shy of his 39th birthday, John Purroy Mitchell was killed in a plane crash.

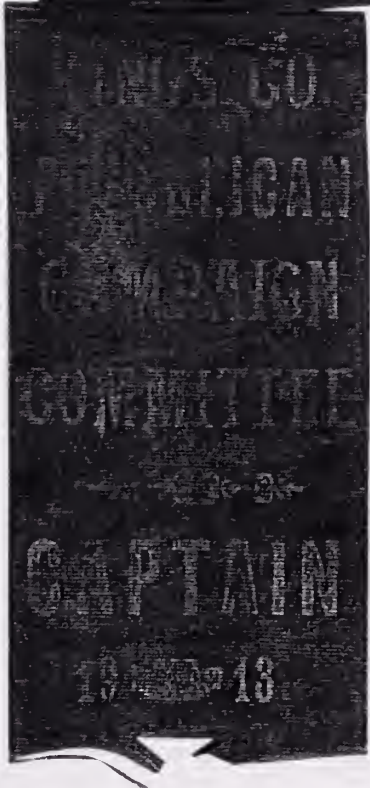
The next three mayors - John Hylan, Jimmy Walker and John O'Brien - were Tammany stalwarts. Civic corruption grew to such proportions that the fusion movement rallied again to elect Fiorello La Guardia in 1933. La Guardia broke the fusion jinx on second terms and won re-election twice. After La Guardia, the Democrats swept back into power despite continuing scandals through twenty years and three mayors: William O'Dwyer, Vincent Impellitteri and Robert Wagner, Jr. (son of the state's U.S. Senator).

In 1965, a Republican/Liberal fusion elected John Lindsay, who served for two tumultuous terms. The Democrats came back again with Abe Beame in 1973. Beame was defeated in the 1977 Democratic primary by Congressman Ed Koch, who went on to win three terms as NYC's mayor. At the height of his popularity, Mayor Koch entered all party primaries and won the nomination of both the Democratic and Republican parties. Despite this, Koch can't be considered a true fusion mayor, as his re-election was primarily a result of his Democratic nomination.

Eventually, Koch wore out his welcome and lost the 1989 Democratic nomination for a fourth term. The Democratic nominee was David Dinkins, who faced a tough fusion opponent in the general election, Republican Rudy Giuliani. After a hard-fought campaign, Dinkins squeaked out victory by the narrowest margin in city history.

After four troubled years in office, Mayor Dinkins faced the same opponent again in 1993 with different results. This time, the fusion movement won and Rudolph Giuliani - running on the Republican, Liberal and Independent lines - became only the fifth Republican mayor in NYC's history. One of his first acts was to move Fiorello La Guardia's desk back into the mayor's office.

Despite constant controversy, Giuliani forthrightly tackled major problems such as crime, budget and education. Though his enemies hated him, the city and nation began to see an astonishing change in the city as decades of decline turned into new growth. In 1993, one of the most heavily Democratic cities in American gave their Republican mayor a second term. Today, Mayor Giuliani is poised to enter what may be one of 2000's most fascinating election battles: a U.S. Senate race against Democratic candidate Hillary Clinton. ★



For the Newer Collector

"Clear Everything With Sidney"

By Steve Baxley



The first name Sidney doesn't mean much to voters today, but in 1944, the Republican Party was hoping that associating FDR with Sidney would win them the election.

In 1944, Democrats expected FDR would run for a fourth term and many party leaders assumed that he would not live out his term. They were concerned that then-Vice President Henry Wallace might become President of the United States. They pointed out to FDR that he would probably lose the South if Wallace remained his running mate.

FDR assured several men of his support for a position on the second spot, including Henry Wallace, James F. Brynes, and Harry Truman. Believing that Roosevelt finally had a preference for Brynes, Democratic National Committee chairman Robert E. Hannegan and Chicago Mayor Ed Kelly met with Democratic Party leaders at a dinner on July 16, 1944. It was here that Hannegan said to Kelly, "Ed, there is one thing we forgot. The President said, 'Clear it with Sidney' "

Sidney was Sidney Hillman, President of the CIO Political Action Committee. Possibly 20 percent of the Democrats' \$7million campaign fund came from the CIO and Hillman didn't clear Brynes for Vice President.

The Republicans thought they had an issue. Could they enrage the voters with the thought that organized labor was buying influence to the extent that labor could accept or reject vice presidential candidates? The context of the "Clear It with Sidney" statement actually had nothing directly to do with the selection of Truman, but with the selection of Brynes for Vice President. Hannegan claimed that he never made the statement and the President denied it also. The Republicans changed the "it" to "Everything" and used the slogan, "Clear Everything With Sidney."

The slogan was also a red-baiting device. The idea was to associate organized labor with communism and show how the government was being controlled by both. Hillman was often used in the same breath with Communist Earl

Browder. The publication *Vote CIO and Get a Soviet America* was published in 1944 by a right-wing group, the Constitutional Educational League.

Here are a few chapters from the first part of the book:

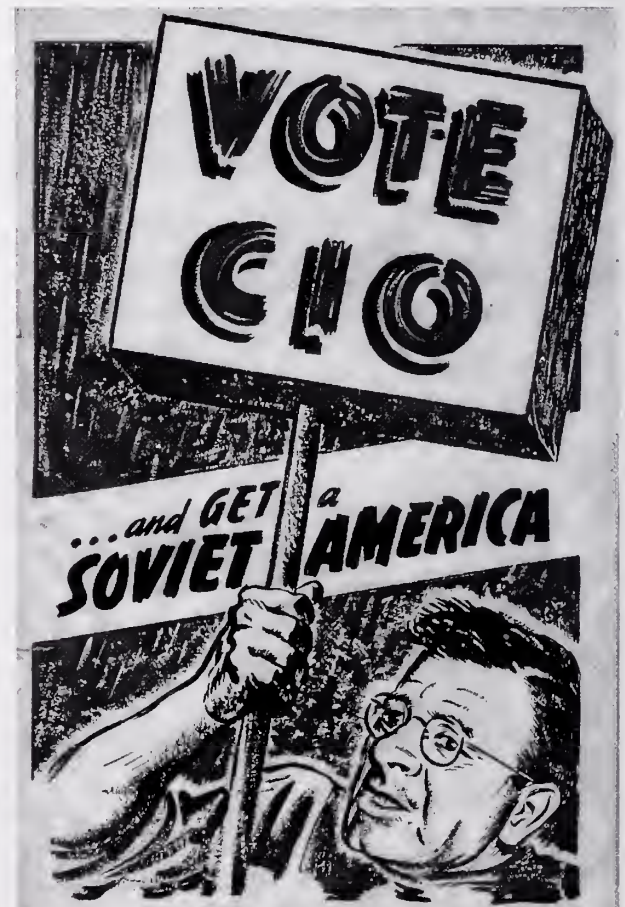
"That Sidney Hillman has become a powerful political leader is an acknowledged fact. It would be hard to believe, however, that he is 'laying down the law' to Franklin Delano Roosevelt. But he is."

"Few people outside of Detroit, except CIO workers, have heard of Richard Frankenstein. It seems incredible that such a man, a rough, hard-boiled bully, could be on the threshold of becoming the economic and industrial dictator of the American people. But he is."

"It is difficult to imagine Communist Earl Browder being the master-mind of the 4th term campaign, but he is."

"Many delegates to the Democratic convention are still trying to figure out just what happened at Chicago. Even top-flight Democratic leaders still don't believe it...it just couldn't have happened. But it did."

You get the idea. The Republican strategy didn't work in 1944 and FDR was re-elected a fourth time.★



Anti-Hillman Pamphlet



Harry Truman and His Screwy Porch

By Stephen Cresswell

On the first day of 1948, a member of the national Fine Arts Commission leaked the news to the press that President Truman planned to build a balcony on the south portico of the White House. The commission member added that the commission opposed the addition, because it would change the appearance of the White House as envisioned by George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, and others.

Improbably, the report developed into a major national news story, which was big news for about a month, and continued to flare up occasionally for the rest of the year. The actual change to the appearance of the White House would be minor since the second-story porch would be partly hidden inside the curved row of columns. Truman first said he needed a place to go to get some fresh air, a place that would afford more privacy than a stroll on the lawn. *The New York Times* and other newspapers took the president to task for wanting to tamper with the hallowed old floor plan and said the president should subordinate his selfish desire for comfort to a need to preserve a historical building that belonged to all the people. Truman later explained that actually he worked too hard to find time to use a porch, and that anyway the porch would not really be private since tourists could see it through the iron fence.

Truman's new explanation of the need for the porch was that it would do away with the need for the terribly unsightly awnings that were attached to the outside of the columns,

halfway up. The awnings were what really marred the appearance of the historical building, and, what is more, the awnings cost \$700 per year for upkeep and replacement. Truman pointed out the \$15,000 porch would actually save the government money over the years. Truman did build the porch and was able to avoid the scrutiny of Congress by using his regular fund for White House upkeep.

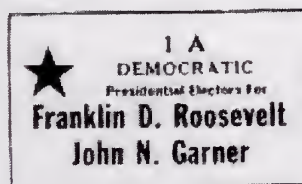
One reason the porch story kept cropping up was that ingenious reporters used it to interrogate Truman on his future plans. At one press conference a reporter pointed out that McKinley and Harding had run front porch campaigns, and he asked if Truman might be considering a back porch run for the presidency. Truman admitted he might. Later, after Henry Wallace had started his third party, and the Dixiecrats were revolting, a reporter asked if Truman expected to get some use of the new porch over the next four years. An irritated Truman replied that he would be there to use it, "don't you worry about that."

The story was big enough news that the Republicans tapped into it by issuing this litho button: "Truman was Screwed to Build a Porch for Dewey." As early as January 1948, Dewey himself was talking about the new porch. Dewey experienced a leaky roof at the New York Executive Mansion. Reporters then questioned him at length about the state of the building. Dewey said the governor's mansion

had a very nice porch, but added that he would look forward to examining the new one at the White House. Reporters responded with a headline that Dewey was going to use the new porch "as a resting place for his battered campaign hat."★

Stephen Cresswell (APIC #11768) is Professor of History at West Virginia Wesleyan College, and author of two books on political history. He is a dealer in political Americana, and an avid collector of Socialist Party memorabilia. This article is taken from his Internet newsletter at <http://www.msyste.net/cress/ballots/buttons.htm>.

FOR ELECTORS OF President and Vice-President



Presidential Electors:

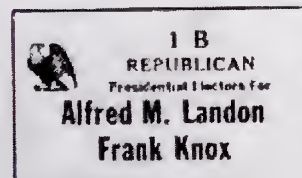
DAVID DUBINSKY

MAX ZARITSKY

SIDNEY HILLMAN



and 44 others



47 Presidential Electors

If you had wished to vote for Franklin D. Roosevelt, the Democratic State Committee has given you no choice but to vote for the Communist Supporters, David Dubinsky, Sidney Hillman and Max Zaritsky.

Even during the 1936 election, Sidney Hillman was drawing attention from conservative Republicans.

1948: Button, Button

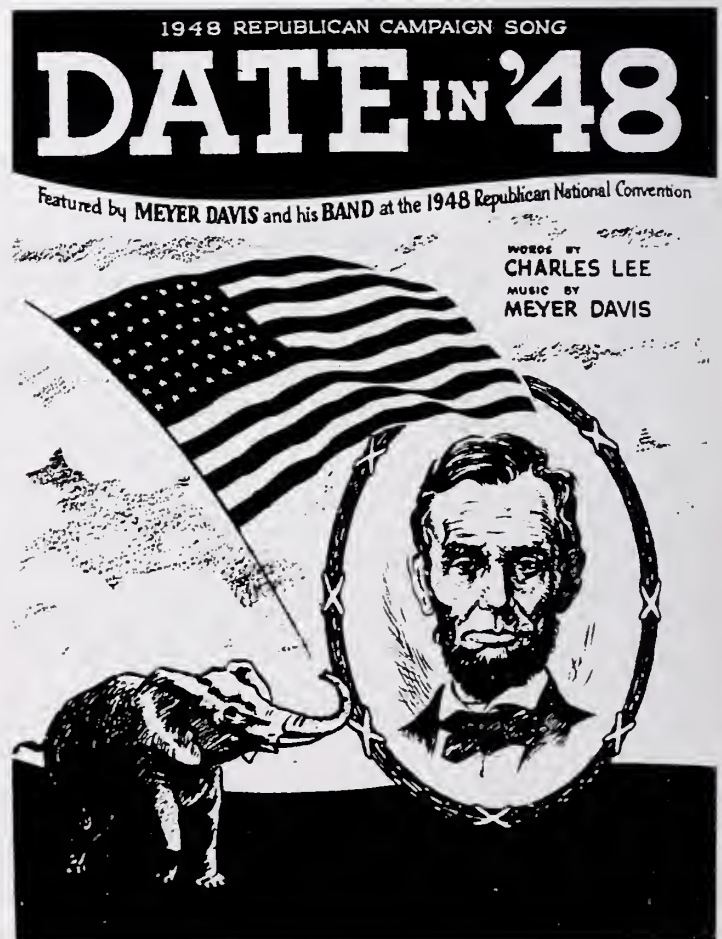
(excerpted from *Newsweek*, October 11, 1948)

submitted by Michael Roberts)

When Thomas E. Dewey started out on his two-week transcontinental campaign trip, four hawkers had an idea: Buying a 1947 Frazer on time payments, Vic Kolachar of McKeesport, Pa., Jimmy Piccalo of Brooklyn, Isadore Seigle of Asbury Park, N.J., and Harry Kibble of New York City, loaded the car with 25- and 50-cent Dewey-Warren buttons, pennants, and lucky rabbit paws, and started out. By driving nights and days, they managed to keep up with the train and peddle their wares at all major Dewey rallies.

Last week end, as they drove back East, Vic Kolachar took an inventory, pronounced business "terrible," and said they were already behind in their payments on the car. Veteran Jimmy Piccalo, who made a pile of money selling Willkie buttons in 1940, was disconsolate, noting that Salt Lake City had been the only profitable spot.

Although none of the four thought so, it was just possible that Harry Kibble's sales methods weren't what they should be. A self-declared foe of Dewey because Dewey sent one of his pals up the river in the notorious Jimmy Hines case, Kibble insisted on shouting: "Get your Dewey buttons here, goddamit!"★





A selection of 1948 Dewey and Truman items.

**OFFICIAL
CHALLENGER**

**TRUMAN
BARKLEY**

GENERAL ELECTION
NOV. 2, 1948

ESSEX COUNTY
BOARD OF ELECTIONS
ERLE M. HOLBROOK, Chairman
JOSEPH A. GLENNON, Jr., Secretary
MARGRETTA FORT
EDWARD A. REILLY

ATTEST
Emer Herrmann
CLERK

**WE DID IT TO DEWEY BEFORE
AND
WILL DO IT
AGAIN**

VOTE DEMOCRATIC.

**START PACKING
HARRY
The DEWEYS
ARE
COMING**

**SAVE WHAT'S LEFT!
VOTE
REPUBLICAN IN '48**

**VOTE
Had
Enough
?
REPUBLICAN**

**MISSOURI
BACK TO
INDEPENDENCE**

**WE'RE MARCHING ON TO VICTORY WITH
DEWEY**

*By
Franklin
WADE*

Franklin Wade Publications
1585 BROADWAY, NEW YORK 19, N. Y.

Donbelle

MADE IN U.S.A.

William Jennings Bryan on Why Bad Fruit Trees Should be Dug Up by the Roots

By Steve Baxley

"The tree which does not bear good fruit shall be dug out by the roots and cast into the fire."

William Jennings Bryan was a very religious man and would not hesitate to quote the Bible for political purposes. The pictured button is often called the "tree of life" button, but the Bible verse on the button makes no reference to the tree of life, but only to unfruitful trees that will be dug up and cast into the fire. The verse quoted on the button is a paraphrase of Luke, chapter 3, verse 9:

"And now also the axe is laid unto the root of the trees, every tree therefore which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire."

The verse is a quote from John the Baptist, who preached in the wilderness, urging his hearers to repent and bring forth fruit worthy of repentance. He baptized those who did in the river Jordan.

John the Baptist gave several examples of fruit worthy of repentance. He said that if a man had two coats, he should take one coat and give it to someone who didn't have one. During this time, tax collectors kept any money they collected over and above the tribute owed the Roman government. John the Baptist told the tax collectors to collect no more than what the Roman government appointed them to collect. He told the soldiers to do violence to no man, neither accuse any falsely, and to be content with their wages. Such actions would show everyone that they had truly repentant hearts and would therefore avoid the wrath to come.

Taken within the political context of 1908, the reference appears obvious. A corrupt tree bears evil fruit and cannot bear good fruit. Fruit is representative of works. In the final judgment, God will judge a man's fruit (works). By judging his works, God judges a person's character. A corrupt heart can only bear corrupt works just as a bad fruit tree can produce only bad fruit. The corrupt tree will be dug up by the roots and cast into the fire on the day of judgment. The button allegorically accuses Taft of having been corrupted by the trusts and therefore incapable of producing good works for the people. The button promotes Bryan as a man of true Christian character, having displayed good fruit in his unselfish life and work.

While the button says nothing of the tree of life, the button does show a tree with good fruit on right (bearing leaves numbered 1 through 10, likely a reference to the Ten Commandments) and a tree without fruit being dug up on the left. The button reflects issues later discussed in an address delivered by Bryan at the World's Missionary Conference in Edinburgh, Scotland on June 17, 1910 (and then published by the religious publisher Fleming H. Revell as *The Fruits of the Tree* by William Jennings Bryan). In his speech in 1910, Bryan said:

"The idea that the character of a tree is to be determined by its fruit—one of the most fundamental principles in our study of nature—runs through the Bible. In the last book of the Word, and in the last chapter of the book, we are told that the tree of life bears 'twelve manner of fruits,' and that it yields its fruits twelve times a



Bryan's intense religious beliefs lead him to be a progressive when young and a reactionary when old. By 1925, he was leading the court fight against teaching the Theory of Evolution in the famous Scopes Trial (photo at right).



year. The verse concludes with a declaration, suggestive of missionary work, namely, that the leaves of the tree are for the 'healing of the nations.'

"If Christianity is to be the tree of life to the world it must be a fruitful tree; if the individual Christian is to be a worthy representative of the tree he must not only bear fruit, but he must bear such fruit that all may see that he is one of those of whom it might be said: 'Ye are the branches.' The fruits of the Spirit are so numerous that it is difficult to select a limited number and describe them as the most important ones, but I venture to submit twelve propositions which are fundamental-twelve truths which must be woven into the Christian life if that life is to be 'neither barren nor unfruitful.' These truths may be added to indefinitely but the number can not easily be reduced, since Christ Himself has placed emphasis upon each and every one of them."

The reference to the Tree of Life in the 1910 speech is the vision written by John describing a vision of the Kingdom of God on earth and is found in the book of Revelation, chapter 22, verses 1&2:

"And he shewed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb. In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yield her fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations."

As far as the 1908 election goes, there may be some subtle nativist elements. It is interesting to note that Taft's Unitarianism was a minor issue in the 1908 campaign. Unitarians did not believe in the divinity of Jesus. This, of

course, was the very opposite of Bryan's view. The verse from Luke on the button is from the same chapter where Luke discussing the baptism of Jesus, declares, "And the Holy Ghost descended in a bodily shape like a dove upon him (Jesus), and a voice came from heaven, which said, Thou art my beloved Son; in thee I am well pleased."

One cannot truly understand Bryan's politics without understanding his religion. He was raised in an environment of fundamentalist Midwestern Christian ethics, and these beliefs affected his politics well into the 1920's when he confronted evolution in the Scopes Monkey Trial.

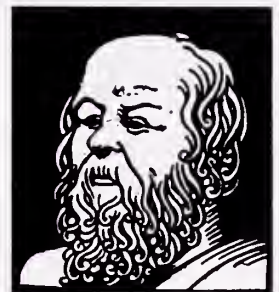
Steve Baxley (APIC #4044) received his BA degree in Journalism and History from San Diego State University. He is presently a writer/editor at a scientific research laboratory in San Diego, California. More of his work can be found at www.users.cts.com/crash/b/baxley/ from whence this article is drawn.



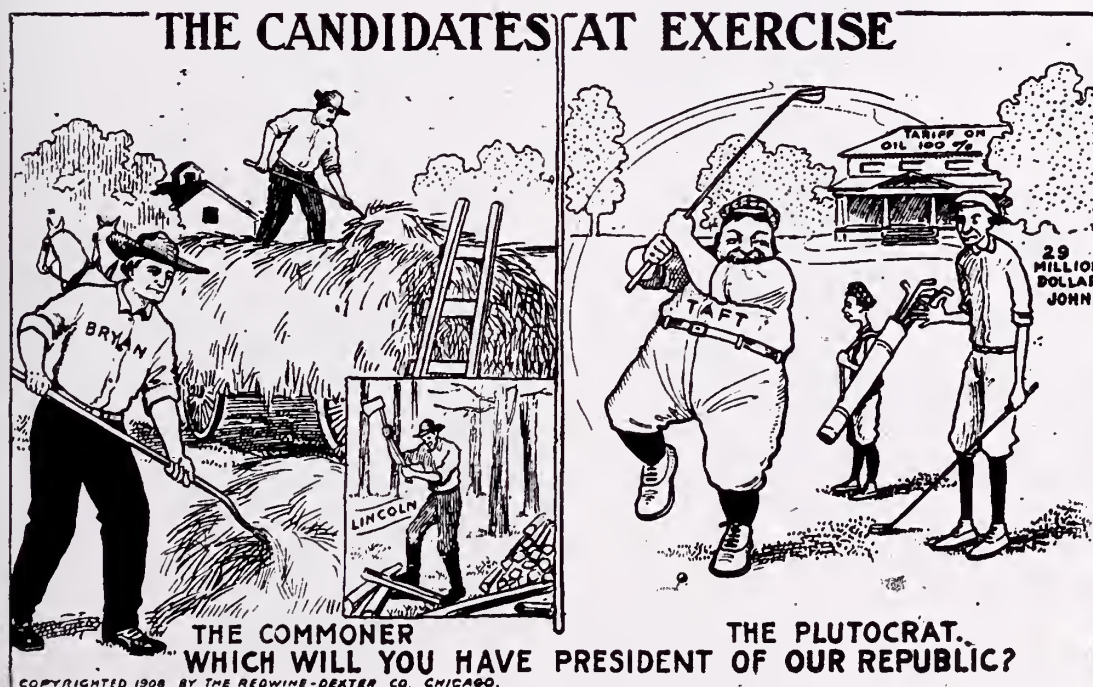
APE



NEANDERTHALER



SOCRATES

DEFENDER OF THE FAITH
(U.S.A., 20th Century)

Above: a pro-Bryan postcard showing contrasting Bryan "The Commoner" with Taft "The Plutocrat." Right: a cartoon using the theory of evolution to attack Bryan.

"The Four Most Miserable Years of My Life." The View from the White House

By Michael Kelly

"After the White House what is there to do but drink?"

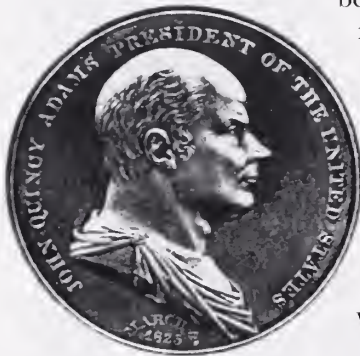
- Franklin Pierce

For all the fierce competition for the White House, those who survived the struggle and set up residence in that famous mansion have not found it to be a source of pure joy. President Andrew Jackson described the Presidency as "a situation of dignified slavery." His successor, President Martin Van Buren, said it was a position of "toilsome and anxious probation."

As our first President began his term, George Washington said, "My movements to the chair of government will be accompanied by feelings not unlike those of a culprit who is going to the place of execution." James Monroe's wife, first lady Elizabeth Cortright Monroe, reported that "My husband pays dear for his White House. It has cost him all his peace and the best of his manly attributes."

Abraham Lincoln joked that "being President makes you feel sometimes like the man who was ridden out of town on a rail. If it wasn't for the honor of the thing, I'd rather walk."

Here are the words of a few presidents about life in the White House.



Thomas Jefferson (1801-9)

I am tired of an office where I can do no more good than many others, who would be glad to be employed in it. To myself, personally, it brings nothing but unceasing drudgery and daily loss of friends.

Every office becoming vacant, every appointment made, *me donne un ingrat, et cent ennemis* [gives me one ingrate and 100 enemies]. My only consolation is in the belief that my fellow citizens at large will give me credit for good intentions.

John Quincy Adams (1825-29)

I can tell you this: no man who ever held the office of President would congratulate a friend on obtaining it. Make no mistake about it – the four most miserable years of my life were my four years in the Presidency.

Andrew Jackson (1829-37)

In this campaign, the whole object of the coalition is to calumniate me. Cart loads of coffin hand-bills, forgeries and pamphlets of the most base calumnies are circulated by the franking privilege of Members of the Congress, and Mr. Clay, even. Mrs. Jackson is not spared, and my pious

REPUBLICANS

Turn out, turn out and save your Country from ruin!

From an Emperor—from a King—from the iron grasp of a British Tory Faction—an unprincipled banditti of British speculators—The hireling tools and emissaries of his majesty king George the 3d have thronged our city and diffused the poison of principles among us.

DOWN WITH THE TORIES, DOWN WITH THE BRITISH FACTION,

Before they have it in their power to enslave you, and reduce your families to distress by heavy taxation. Republicans want no Tribute-liars—they want no ship Ocean-liars—they want no Rufus King's for Lords—they want no Varick to lord it over them—they want no Jones for senator, who fought with the British against the Americans in time of the war.—But they want in their places such men as

Jefferson & Clinton,

who fought their Country's Battles in the year '76



On the left is a rare poster featuring Thomas Jefferson and his running mate, Vice President George Clinton. Note that our current President is named William Jefferson Clinton but few observers have mentioned the "Jefferson Clinton" coincidence. On the right is an Andrew Jackson sewing box.

Mother, nearly 50 years in the tomb, and who, from her cradle to her death, had not a speck upon her character, has been dragged forth and held to public scorn as a prostitute who intermarried a Negro, and my eldest brother sold as a slave in Carolina....I am branded with every crime, and was not my hands tied, and my mouth closed, I would have soon put an end to their slanders. This they know, but suppose when the election's over all things will die away. NOT SO! The day of retribution must come.

Martin Van Buren (1837-41)

Mr. Jefferson said that the two happiest days of life were those of his entrance upon his office and of his surrender of it. The truth of the matter may be stated in a word: whilst to have been deemed worthy by a majority of the People of the United States to fill the office of Chief Magistrate of the Republic is an honor which ought to satisfy the aspirations of the most ambitious citizen, the period of his actual possession of its powers and performance of its duties is and must, from the nature of things, always be, to a right-minded man one of toilsome and anxious probation.

William Henry Harrison (1841)

The job-seekers pack the White House every day, pushing their applications at me – in my hands, in my pockets. They pursue me so closely that I can not even attend to the necessary functions of nature.



James Buchanan (1857-61)

When I parted from President Lincoln, on introducing him to the Executive Mansion, according to custom, I said to him: "If you are as happy, my dear sir, on entering this house as I am in leaving it and returning home, you are the happiest man in this country!"

James A. Garfield (1881)

My God! What is there in this place that a man should ever want to get in it?

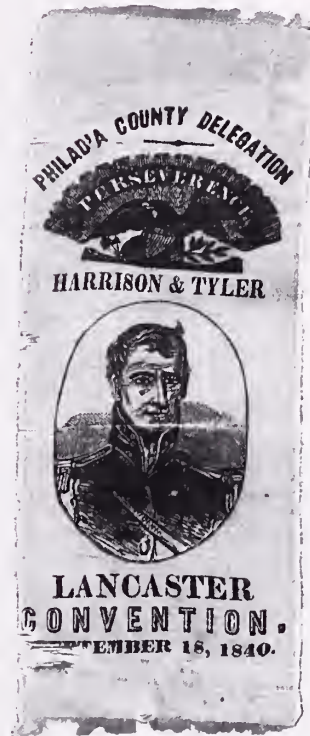
Chester A. Arthur (1881-85)

Have you seen this – this so-called White House? The way the Garfields left it? I will not live in a house looking

**M. VAN BUREN,
FOR
PRESIDENT.**



M Van Buren



A myriad of items from presidents who had bad things to say about their job. Top: William Taft celluloid and Benjamin Harrison badge. Bottom (left to right): Ribbons from Martin Van Buren, William Harrison and a James Garfield-Chester Alan Arthur jugate.

this way. It Congress does not make an appropriation I will go ahead and have it done and pay for it out of my own pocket. I will not live in a house like this. It is full of modern abominations in upholstery and garish gilding, and all the rooms look staring, pretentious and Frenchy. The old portwine colored mahogany sofas and chairs which were in the State Parlor in Lincoln's time were better than anything that has come in their place. At least they were dignified.

Benjamin Harrison (1889-93)

It is a rare piece of good fortune during the early months of an administration if the President gets one wholly uninterrupted hour at his desk each day. His time is so broken into bits that he is often driven to late night work, or to set up a desk in his bedroom, when preparing a message or other paper requiring unbroken attention.

William Howard Taft (1909-13)

I have come to the conclusion that the major part of the work of a President is to increase the gate receipts of expositions and fairs and bring tourists into the town. I'll be damned if I'm not getting tired of this. ... And to those who envy me in this office - let me say, the White House is the loneliest place in the world. ... But, on the whole, my wife seems to enjoy it. On those occasions when she does complain to me about living conditions in the White House, I just tell her, "Well, my dear, we must serve notice on the landlord."

Woodrow Wilson (1913-21)

The office of President requires the constitution of an athlete, the patience of a mother, and the endurance of an early Christian....The President is a superior kind of slave.

Warren G. Harding (1921-23)

I knew this job would be too much for me. Oftentimes, as I sit here, I don't seem to grasp that I am President. If there is anything wrong with the White House job, it is the inability to be a human being. The White House is a prison. I can't get away from the men who dog my footsteps. I am in jail.

Herbert Hoover (1929-33)

Many years ago I concluded that a few hair shirts were part of the mental wardrobe of every man. The President differs only from other men in that he has a more extensive wardrobe.

Dwight D. Eisenhower (1953-61)

The nakedness of the battlefield when the soldier is all alone in the smoke and the clamor and the terror of war is comparable to the loneliness - at times - of the Presidency.★



Even modern presidents have had negative things to say about their experiences. Top: Harding ribbon. Center: Hoover stamp (shown enlarged). Right: Eisenhower sticker (shown reduced).

The Holiday Season in the Hayes White House: (Excerpts from the Diary of Rutherford B. Hayes)

By Stephen Cresswell

Most presidents complain of a lack of privacy in the White House and few presidents valued private time with his family more than did Rutherford B. Hayes. After 120 years, however, there can be little harm in our looking in on the Hayes family at home. In the first Christmas excerpt we see how even on Christmas day politics was never far from the president's mind. In the second passage we learn more about Christmas customs in the White House. In the entry from Hayes' last New Year's Day in the White House we learn more about what the Hayes family did for fun, while

also learning more about how Hayes felt about his impending retirement after four years in the Executive Mansion.

The Lucy referred to is Hayes' wife, while Fanny and Scott are his young children. "Ruddy" is Rutherford, Jr., who was about 20 years old at the time he is mentioned.

25th December, 1878.

A happy day for Fanny and Scott. Lucy not quite well. Mrs. Austin and Lizzy and Lena Scott visiting us. Ruddy at home. More presents than ever before. But a long day!

We are prosperous—our main ideas more acceptable than ever—Resumption seems assured—The Southern policy safely vindicated. —We both long to be at home, and free and at peace! Two years more of responsibility, care, and labor!

Xmas, 1880.

As usual the gifts were collected in one room (in this case the red chamber) and the children, servants, and friends in another (the library) and on the ringing of a bell at the door, Scott & Fan ran and brought a single article well concealed by wrappings to me. After some delays and guesses, it is found whose gift it is. All got something. Scott & Fanny, many things. All at least a \$5.00 gold piece.

Sunday, 2d January, 1881.

Our New Years ceremonies passed off well—the papers say with "unwonted brilliancy." Lucy had gathered a fine bevy of young ladies as our guests...A very fair promise of enjoyment for the next few weeks. We begin to long for home and freedom, more and more as the time draws nearer. Very cold weather for two weeks—lately the coldest known in Washington in many years...Snow a foot deep and good sleighing. Twice riding with Hawkins, once with Mrs. Senator Hill, and today with [Secretary of the Treasury] Sherman. I am soon to become a private citizen—to be entitled to the privileges and immunities of that honorable and enviable position. To have a right to manage my own affairs without intrusion. If not one of the wealthy citizens of our State, I trust I shall always be ready to offer to friends that best part of hospitality, a hearty welcome to my home, and to those who need it that part of charity cheerfully given according to my means.★



Stereoviews of President Hayes, his wife and the Hayes-Wheeler ticket.

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